

# THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

## A. INTRODUCTION

Created by a law signed by President William H. Taft on March 4, 1913, the U.S. Department of Labor is one of the oldest cabinet level departments in the Federal government.

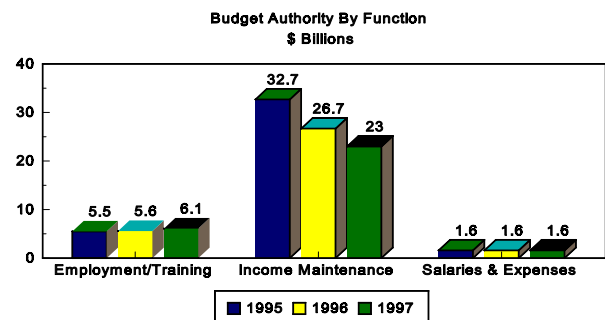
### Mission

The Department of Labor fosters and promotes the welfare of the job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States by improving their working conditions, advancing their opportunities for profitable employment, and protecting their retirement investments. In carrying out this mission, the Department administers a variety of Federal Labor laws guaranteeing workers' rights to safe and healthful working conditions; a minimum hourly wage and overtime pay; freedom from employment discrimination, unemployment insurance, and other income support. The Department also protects workers' pension and other benefit rights; provides for job-training programs; helps workers find jobs; helps employers find workers; works to strengthen free collective bargaining; and keeps track of changes in employment, prices, and other national economic measurements.

### Background

During FY 1997, the Department, with the arrival of a new Secretary, began to refine its goals and priorities for America's working men and women. Previous financial statements discussed agency accomplishments arrayed around the broad goals of: **first jobs**, to improve opportunities for good jobs; **new jobs**, to ease the transition of American workers from job to job; and **better jobs**, to ensure both through enforcement presence and compliance assistance so that employers understand the economic benefits of safe and high performance workplaces. Since the arrival of the new Secretary, new goals have been established for the Department which are reflected in the Department's Strategic Plan and are discussed later in this document. The Secretary's five new goals provide a different variation on the themes to aid America's working men and women. The format of the "Overview of the Reporting Entity" and the Supplemental information section has been changed for consistency with the Secretary's new strategic goals. The information that follows is arrayed in a manner that will be

### U.S. Department of Labor



consistent with performance reporting requirements under the Government Performance and Results Act and for the Department's Accountability Report. This is a transition year for the format which will not be completed until the end of FY 1999.

### **The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)**

GPRA has provided a valuable set of tools to enhance the Department's program and managerial effectiveness. The Department has been a leader in government and demonstrated a commitment to ensure GPRA's successful implementation. Labor was one of the first Cabinet agencies to establish a performance agreement between the Secretary and the President, and subsequently performance agreements were implemented between the Secretary and the Assistant Secretaries. Several hundred Department managers and supervisors have been trained in developing results-oriented management approaches.

Many of the priorities and initiatives established for FY 1997 formed the basis for early versions of the agency's individual strategic plans. With the change of Administrations, priorities were revisited and goals established to support the Secretary's vision for the Department through FY 2002.

While the Department has made considerable progress, much remains to be done. Relevant measurement and evaluation data are still needed by several program agencies to move from a focus on outputs to outcomes to determine progress in achieving goals. In addition, information technology, financial management, and human resource systems are being enhanced to support agency efforts and to help agencies achieve the Departmental goals. The Secretary is committed to managing the Department's programs to achieve the outcomes planned for America's working families.

### **Goals**

Work is central to living a good life, for several reasons. It not only provides us with the wages and benefits to meet our families' needs, but it affirms our humanity and allows us to make our own unique contribution to the world. Building on the progress of previous years, the Secretary established five overarching goals for the Department. The first five of the Secretary's goals are fundamental to building lasting prosperity for all Americans. A sixth goal has been added to ensure that the Department is managed in a way to support the efforts of the agencies whose missions support the overarching goals. In this transition period, much of the data reported herein does not yet reflect all accomplishments against the new goals in agency strategic plans since FY 1997 is the base year. However, in preparation for GPRA reporting, performance measures and accomplishments have been arrayed by the goals to reflect the long-term objectives for the Department. When this report is prepared for FY 1999, the measures, accomplishments, and the array of agencies supporting multiple goals will more completely reflect the Department's accomplishments under each of the Secretary's goals. Following is a listing of the Secretary's goals.

### **Goal One: Lifelong Learning and Skill Development**

In our rapidly changing, highly competitive global economy, every American must be able to get the education and skills to find and hold good jobs with rising incomes and good benefits throughout their lives. Our companies, our communities and our country need the most skilled workers in the world.

### **Goal Two: Promoting Welfare to Work**

In this land of opportunity, opportunity must be available to all. That is why we must help people move from welfare to work, because a paycheck is the surest passport to dignity. We have made great progress in reducing the welfare rolls but employers, community organizations and all levels of government must work together if we are going to get the job done.

### **Goal Three: Enhancing Pension and Health Benefits Security**

As Americans live longer, we must ensure economic security and peace of mind for retirees who have earned it through a lifetime of work. We have done a great job in adding years to life, but if we want to add life to those years we must protect pensions, expand coverage, and encourage savings for retirement.

### **Goal Four: Safe, Healthy, and Equal Opportunity Workplaces**

Never before has the American workplace been so safe, healthy and fair but we cannot rest when workers are still killed or injured on the job, or are denied jobs, promotions or fair pay because of race, gender, disability or other such factors. We must see the day when all Americans come home from work with their bodies unharmed, their souls intact, and their dignity uncompromised.

### **Goal Five: Helping Working Americans Balance Work and Family**

As the number of women working outside the home have increased, and the 9-to-5 job has given way to the around-the-clock economy, all too often this has pitted jobs against families. For our people to be happier, and more productive, we must strike a more livable balance between work and family. If our country truly is to succeed, we all must succeed at home, as well as on the job.

### **Goal Six: Maintaining a Departmental Strategic Management Process**

To maximize the overall achievement of the Secretary's goals, the Department established this overarching goal to effectively link strategic planning, resource allocation, and on-going operational activities with program strategies. This goal addresses major cross-cutting

functions such as Departmental leadership and guidance, financial management, information technology and human resources management.

## **DOL Agency Missions**

The following DOL agencies work to accomplish the Department of Labor's mission and goals and are reporting in this financial statement.

### **Employment and Training Administration (ETA)**

To contribute to the more efficient and effective functioning of the U.S. labor market by providing high-quality job training, employment to the low-income and dislocated worker, labor market information, and income maintenance services primarily through State and local workforce development systems.

### **Pension Welfare Benefits Administration (PWBA)**

To protect the pension, health, and other welfare benefits of the over 150 million participants and beneficiaries in private-sector employee benefit plans.

### **Employment Standards Administration (ESA)**

To protect the welfare and rights of, and generate equal employment opportunity for, American workers by promoting compliance with the various laws that it administers; and to provide the best possible program for income replacement, medical treatment, and rehabilitation for injured Federal workers and miners.

### **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**

To "assure so far as possible every working man and woman in the Nation safe and healthful working conditions." This mission involves the application of a set of tools by OSHA (e.g., standards development, enforcement, compliance assistance), which enable employers to maintain safe and healthful workplaces.

### **Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA)**

To protect the safety and health of the Nation's miners by determining compliance with Federal safety and health standards through inspections and investigations and working cooperatively with the mining industry, labor, and the States to improve training programs aimed at preventing accidents and occupationally caused diseases.

### **Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)**

To collect, process, analyze, and disseminate essential and accurate statistical data in the field of labor economics to the American public, the U.S. Congress, other Federal agencies, State and local governments, business, and labor.

#### **Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB)**

To carry out the Secretary's international responsibilities, develop Departmental policy and programs relating to international labor activities, and coordinate Departmental international activities involving other U.S. Government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations.

#### **Women's Bureau (WB)**

To promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment. The Women's Bureau also represents working women in the public policy process and serves as an advocate to ensure that employment-related policies address the needs and concerns of women in the labor force.

#### **Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS)**

To help Veterans, Reservists, and National Guard members in securing and maintaining employment and the rights and benefits associated with employment.

#### **Office of the Inspector General (OIG)**

To serve the American worker and taxpayer by conducting audits, investigations, and evaluations that result in improvements in the effectiveness, efficiency, and economy of Departmental programs and operations; prevent fraud and abuse in DOL programs and labor racketeering in the American workplace; and provide advice to the Secretary and the Congress on how to attain the highest possible program performance.

### **Benefits Review Board (BRB)**

To consider and decide appeals raising substantial questions of law or fact from decisions of Administrative Law Judges with respect to cases arising under the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act (33 U.S.C. 901) and its extensions and the Black Lung Benefits Act of 1972 (30 U.S.C. 801). The BRB exercises the same authority that the United States District Courts formerly held in these areas of the law prior to the 1972 amendments to both Acts.

### **Office of Administrative Law Judges (OALJ)**

To conduct hearings under more than 80 separate statutes and Executive Orders. Hearings are required to be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, which requires the application of the principles of due process similar to civil cases heard in federal or state courts.

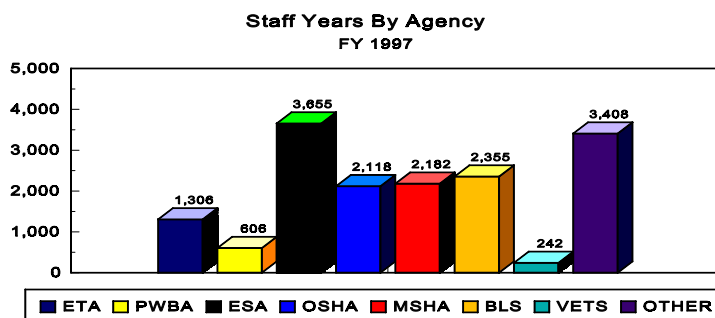
### **The President's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities (PCEPD)**

To facilitate communication, coordination and promotion of public and private efforts to enhance the employment of people with disabilities; provide information, training, and technical assistance in support of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, to America's business leaders, organized labor, rehabilitation and service providers, advocacy organizations, families and individuals with disabilities.

## Departmental Agencies Supporting the Secretary's Goals

As the Department continues its work on developing cross-cutting goals and initiatives, more agency performance measures will appear under multiple goals as in the Department's Strategic Plan. During this transition period, DOL agencies have been listed under one goal. A number of agency's accomplishments supporting these goals are not currently included in this section of the financial statement and for simplification this year, their missions, goals/measures and accomplishments do not appear during this period of transition.

### U.S. Department of Labor



Agency initiatives under the **first goal**, (lifelong learning and skill development) include those of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS), and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM).

The **second goal**, (promoting welfare to work) primarily reflects activities of the Employment and Training Administration. The new Balanced Budget Act of 1997, signed by the President on August 5, 1997 provides Welfare-to-Work Grants. Performance measures noted in the Department's Performance Plan will appear in future reports. For purposes of this transition report, all of the ETA information will be included in one section under goal one. Work activity in the Women's Bureau, VETS, and OASAM also support the second goal.

The **third goal**, (safe, healthy, and equal opportunity workplaces) primarily reflects responsibilities of the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration and the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

The **fourth goal** (helping working Americans balance work and family) is supported by work activity in the Employment Standards Administration including: the Wage and Hour Division, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, the Office of Labor-Management Standards, and the Office of Workers Compensation Programs. The Benefits Review Board, the Office of Administrative Law Judges, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, the

President's Council on Employment for People with Disabilities, ETA, OASAM and the Office of the Solicitor also support this goal.

The **fifth goal** (maintaining a Departmental strategic management process) is supported by work in the Women's Bureau, VETS, ETA and OASAM.

And the **sixth goal** is supported by work in the Office of Inspector General, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management.